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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
09/898,910	07/03/2001	Stephan Erbel	SCHWP0145US	9595

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RENNER, OTTO, BOISSELLE & SKLAR, LLP
Nineteenth Floor
1621 Euclid Avenue
Cleveland, OH 44115-2191

EXAMINER

CHURCH, CRAIG E

ART UNIT

PAPER NUMBER

2882

DATE MAILED: 12/02/2002

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary	Application No.	Applicant(s)
	Examiner	Group Art Unit

—The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet beneath the correspondence address—

P r i o r i t y for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, such period shall, by default, expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication .
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133).

Status

Responsive to communication(s) filed on 9/19/02.

This action is FINAL.

Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11; 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

Claim(s) 1-15 is/are pending in the application.

Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.

Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.

Claim(s) 1-15 is/are rejected.

Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.

Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction or election requirement.

Application Papers

See the attached Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review, PTO-948.

The proposed drawing correction, filed on _____ is approved disapproved.

The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are objected to by the Examiner.

The specification is objected to by the Examiner.

The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119 (a)-(d)

Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d).

All Some* None of the CERTIFIED copies of the priority documents have been

received.

received in Application No. (Series Code/Serial Number) _____.

received in this national stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

*Certified copies not received: _____

Attachment(s)

Information Disclosure Statement(s), PTO-1449, Paper No(s). _____ Interview Summary, PTO-413

Notice of Reference(s) Cited, PTO-892 Notice of Informal Patent Application, PTO-152

Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review, PTO-948 Other _____

Office Action Summary

It is required that a brief description of the drawings be added to the specification.

The following is a quotation of the first paragraph of 35 U.S.C. § 112:

The specification shall contain a written description of the invention, and of the manner and process of making and using it, in such full, clear, concise, and exact terms as to enable any person skilled in the art to which it pertains, or with which it is most nearly connected, to make and use the same and shall set forth the best mode contemplated by the inventor of carrying out his invention.

The specification is objected to under 35 U.S.C. § 112, first paragraph, as failing to provide an enabling disclosure. The manner of developing an inversely planned radiotherapy plan has not been taught.

Claims 1-15 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112, first paragraph, for the reasons set forth in the objection to the specification.

Claims 1-15 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention. The limitations conveyed by the terms "inversely planned radiotherapy plan" are unclear. Apparatus claims 13 and 14 improperly depend on method claim 1.

The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. § 103 which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negatived by the manner in which the invention was made.

Subject matter developed by another person, which qualifies as prior art only under subsection (f) or (g) of section 102 of this title, shall not preclude patentability under this section where the subject matter and the claimed invention were, at the time the invention was made, owned by the same person or subject to an obligation of assignment to the same person.

Claims 1-4 and 7-15 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103 as being unpatentable over Swerdloff (5661773). Swerdloff teaches a radiotherapy method comprising

acquiring a CT images of a region to be treated

creating a treatment plan based on said images

treating the patient

acquiring new CT images

altering the previous treatment plan based on the new images.

See, for example, lines 46-62 of column 2 and lines 46-61 of column

3. The metes and bounds of the claims are obscure.

Claims 5 and 6 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103 as being unpatentable over Swerdloff in view of WO 97/40766 cited by applicant. Precise patient positioning is essential in radiotherapy, and it would have been obvious therefor to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to employ the WIPO system in the Swerdloff method.

Applicant's arguments filed September 19, 2002 have been fully considered but they are not deemed to be persuasive. A completely meaningful analysis of applicant's arguments cannot be made since the significance of an "inverse therapy plan" is unclear. These are not terms of art, and applicant has not offered a definition thereof.

That Swerdloff's amended plan may be based in part on dose errors in the original plan discovered during treatment is not precluded by applicant's claim language. The claims do not mention errors, and nothing in the instant claims precludes an intermediate step of actually performing treatment as argued. In fact the applicant's disclosure explains that his new plan succeeds treatment and that his new plan results from dose errors as well as from positioning errors. Page 3 of the specification states "the interior of the patient can shift between the different treatment appointments", and page 4 states "In an advantageous embodiment, the dosage distribution of an older, conventionally or inversely produced radiotherapy plan which was found to be "OK" is used as a preset value for the recalculation".

While applicant discusses dose-volume histograms, no such limitations appear in the claims.

Claim 1 simply recites

an up-to-date radiotherapy plan is calculated at least partly on the basis of the results of an already existing, approved, older plan

and this is taught by Swerdloff.

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THIS ACTION IS MADE FINAL, Applicant is reminded of the extension of time policy as set forth in 37 C.F.R. § 1.136(a).

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR RESPONSE TO THIS FINAL ACTION IS SET TO EXPIRE THREE MONTHS FROM THE DATE OF THIS ACTION. IN THE EVENT A FIRST RESPONSE IS FILED WITHIN TWO MONTHS OF THE MAILING DATE OF THIS FINAL ACTION AND THE ADVISORY ACTION IS NOT MAILED UNTIL AFTER THE END OF THE THREE-MONTH SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD, THEN THE SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD WILL EXPIRE ON THE DATE THE ADVISORY ACTION IS MAILED, AND ANY EXTENSION FEE PURSUANT TO 37 C.F.R. § 1.136(a) WILL BE CALCULATED FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THE ADVISORY ACTION. IN NO EVENT WILL THE STATUTORY PERIOD FOR RESPONSE EXPIRE LATER THAN SIX MONTHS FROM THE DATE OF THIS FINAL ACTION.

Any inquiry concerning this communication should be directed to Examiner Church at telephone number (703) 308-4861.

Craig E Church

CRAIG E. CHURCH
Senior Examiner
ART UNIT 2882